MOTORCYCLE SAFETY FOUNDATION
CYCLE SAFETY INFO
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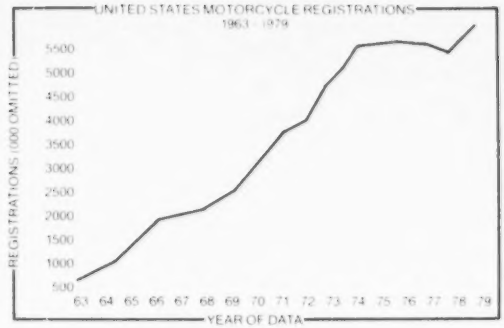
Motorcycle Statistics—1979

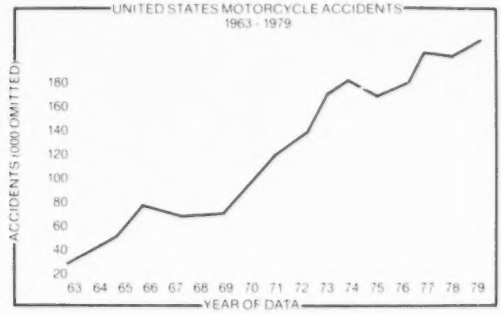
THE 1979 PICTURE

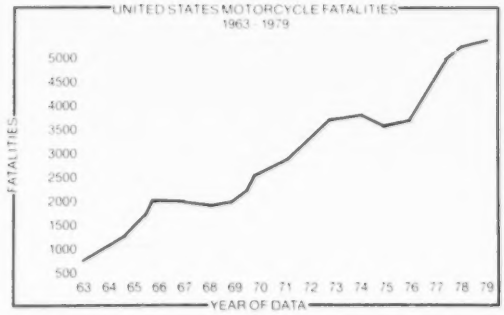
Motorcycle registrations in the U.S. went up by 493,656 during 1979. This 10 percent increase is the largest yearly increase since 1974 when registrations went up nearly 13 percent in one year. In 1979, 5,339,358 motorcycles were registered.

Although motorcycle accidents increased by 7.3 percent from 1978 to 1979, the ratio of accidents per 10,000 registrations decreased by nearly 10 points, from 342.37 in 1978 to 333.34 in 1979.

Fatalities in motorcycle accidents rose by only 4.8 percent in 1979—from 4,624 in 1978 to 4,850. This was a much smaller increase than the year before when fatalities rose by more than 12 percent.







This small increase also meant that the ratios of fatalities per 10,000 registrations and per 100 accidents decreased from 1978 to 1979. Fatalities per 10,000 registrations were 9.08 for 1979 and 9.54 for 1978; fatalities per 100 accidents were 2.72 for 1979 and 2.79 for 1978.

A WORD ABOUT THE DATA

There is no uniformly representative national reporting system for motorcycle statistics. Some states, when reporting registrations record "motorcycles only"; some include combinations of mopeds, motorized tricycles, scooters and even similar vehicles. In other states motorcycles have been registered with trailers and snowmobiles.

Accident reports vary from state to state, as well. The property damage thresholds required in police reports are not uniform among the states. Accidents with only minor property damage often are not recorded at all.

THE TYPICAL ACCIDENT

The "typical" motorcycle accident involves a motorcyclist between the ages of 20 and 24. Accidents occur most often between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. Most accidents occur at non-intersection locations, usually in an urbanized area. Motorcycle operators are at fault in about 40 percent of these accidents. Most multi-vehicle accidents occur at intersections with the car driver at fault nearly 70 percent of the time.

ACCIDENT REDUCTION MEASURES

Both the Motorcycle Safety Foundation and the American Motorcyclist Association support the concepts of motorcycle rider education and quality licensing programs as motorcycle accident countermeasures. In addition, MSF and AMA urge the voluntary use of helmets and other protective clothing to reduce injuries when an accident does happen.

In 1979 more than 400 organizations offered motorcycle rider education courses either meeting or exceeding MSF classroom, range and curriculum requirements. More than 20,000 students, throughout the United States, successfully completed rider education courses sponsored by these organizations.

A federally-funded project will begin late in 1980 in New York state to determine the accident reduction capabilities of rider education programs like the Motorcycle Safety Foundation's *Motorcycle Rider Course*.

In addition a federally-funded research study in California has already shown the accident reducing potential of improved licensing. Results of the study showed a 14 to 21 percent reduction in motorcycle accidents for operators completing the comprehensive testing program.

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation is a national, private, nonprofit organization whose goal is the reduction of motorcycle accidents and injuries. This is accomplished through the development and implementation of motorcycle rider education and licensing improvement programs, and through research and public information programs focused on motorcyclist and motorist operations. MSF is sponsored by the five leading motorcycle manufacturers: Honda, Yamaha, Kawaski, Suzuki and Harley-Davidson.

The American Motorcyclist Association is a nonprofit service and activity organization wnose purpose is to pursue, promote and protect the interests of motorcyclists. Through its government relations and communications departments, the AMA prepares news releases, makes public appearances and educates America's legislators about the realities of motorcycling. The AMA also offers individual members a monthly magazine and the opportunity to participate in annual road and competition events.

1979 NATIONAL AND STATE STATISTICS

	Registrations	Reported Accidents	Accidents Per 10,000 Registrations	Fatalities	Fatalities Per 10,000 Registrations	Fatalities Per 100 Accidents
National	5,339,358	177,984	333.34	4,850	9.08	2.72
State Data						
Alabama (1, 5, 6, 15, 20)	70,604	2,670	378.17	57	8.07	2.14
Alaska (2, 12, 15, 20)	9,842	294	298.72	11	11.18	3.74
Arizona (2, 11, 15, 20)	72,917	4,108	563.38	135	18.51	3.29
Arkansas (4, 10, 15, 20)	33,415	1,164	348.35	37	11.07	3.18
California (1, 12, 15, 20)	713,820	32,530	455.72	862	12.08	2.65
Colorado (5, 10, 15, 20)	115,000*	2,646	230.09	78	6.78	2.95
Connecticut (12, 15, 20)	74,324	3,057*	411.31	91	12.24	2.98
Delaware (1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 15, 20)	11,494	389	338.44	12	10.44	3.08
District of Columbia (1, 14, 18, 20)	4,398	438	995.91	4	9.10	0.91
Florida (2, 9, 15, 20)	184,595	9,324	505.11	202	10.94	2.17
Georgia (1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 16, 19)	105,139	3,128	297.51	108	10.27	3.45
Hawaii (5, 11, 15, 20)	9,986	599	599.84	21	21.03	3.51
Idaho (13, 15, 20)	51,266	873	170.29	34	6.63	3.90
Illinois (1, 10, 15, 20)	280,658	8,297	295.63	210	7.48	2.53
Indiana (5, 7, 15, 19)	154,941	4,603	297.08	161	10.31	3.50
Iowa (1, 10, 15, 20)	203,600	2,987	146.71	81	3.98	2.71
Kansas (1, 11, 15, 20)	87,511	2,208	252.31	54	6.17	2.45
Kentucky (5, 9, 15, 20)	61,925	1,846	298.10	65	10.50	3.52
Louisiana (5, 14, 18, 20)	34,180	3,640	1,064.95	80	23.41	2.20
Maine (5, 9, 15, 20)	35,478	1,010	284.68	28	7.89	2.77
Maryland (8, 15, 20)	66,521	3,858*	579.97	64	9.62	1.66
Massachusetts (1, 9, 20)	100,502	3,665*	364.67	94	9.35	2.56
Michigan (1, 2, 4, 9, 15, 20)	251,210	7,448	296.49	130	5.18	1.75
Minnesota (11, 15, 20)	156,552	2,872	183.45	97	6.20	3.38
Mississippi (4, 10, 15, 20)	23,145	593	256.21	18	7.78	3.04
Missouri (5, 12, 15, 20)	146,788	3,041	207.17	76	5.18	2.50
Montana (3, 10, 15, 20)	27,392	596	217.58	20	7.30	3.36
Nebraska (5, 10, 15, 20)	57,172*	1,474	257.82	32	5.60	2.17
Nevada (3, 5, 10, 15, 20)	24,149	1,184	490.29	37	15.32	3.13
New Hampshire (1, 11, 15, 20)	32,883	955	319.62	35	10.64	3.33
New Jersey (5, 9, 15, 20)	100,482	4,384	436.30	85	8.46	1.94
New Mexico (4, 7, 15, 20)	46,803	1,864	398.27	50	10.68	2.68
New York (4, 12, 15, 20)	178,355	9,106	510.55	196	10.99	2.15
North Carolina (5, 9, 15, 20)	103,164	2,942	285.18	102	9.89	3.47
North Dakota (5, 12, 15, 20)	28,108	365	129.86	12	4.27	3.29
Ohio (8, 15, 20)	274,000*	8,698	317.45	251	9.16	2.89
Oklahoma (4, 7, 15, 20)	122,764	2,159	175.87	80	6.52	3.71
Oregon (1, 9, 15, 20)	86,952	1,415	162.73	66	7.59	4.66
Pennsylvania (1, 13, 15, 20)	217,036	5,669	261.20	185	8.52	3.26
Rhode Island (1, 20)	23,467	423*	180.25	13	5.54	3.07
South Carolina (5, 9, 15, 20)	37,466	1,543	411.84	42	11.21	2.72
South Dakota (1, 3, 12, 15, 20)	31,102	597	191.95	22	7.07	3.69
Tennessee (1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 15, 20)	81,833	2,779	339.59	62	7.58	2.23
Texas (1, 10, 15, 20)	290,000*	10,539	363.41	358	12.34	3.40
Utah (1, 2, 3, 4, 12, 15, 20)	61,687	1,230	199.39	31	5.03	2.52
Vermont (1, 9, 15, 20)	23,293	454	194.91	11	4.72	2.42
Virginia (5, 15, 20)	76,147	2,679	351.82	59	7.75	2.20
Washington (11, 15, 20)	129,641	3,992	307.93	121	9.33	3.03
West Virginia (1, 10, 15, 20)	37,415	985	263.26	31	8.29	3.15
Wisconsin (1, 2, 3, 4, 12, 15, 20)	168,625	4,306	255.36	124	7.35	2.88
Wyoming (5, 10, 15, 20)	19,611	358	182.55	15	7.65	4.19

*Estimates

Footnotes

Registrations
1. Includes mopeds or motorized cycles
2. Includes mopeds and "similar vehicles"
3. Includes tricycles
4. Includes mopeds, tricycles and scooters
5. Other

Accidents—Damage Threshold
6. $0-$25-$50 property damage threshold
7. $100 property damage threshold
8. $150 property damage threshold
9. $200 property damage threshold
10. $250 property damage threshold
11. $300 property damage threshold
12. $400-$500 property damage threshold
13. No property damage figure specified
14. Other

Accidents—Description
15. Accident listed as "property damage, personal injury or fatality"
16. Accident listed as "any reported motorcycle accident"
17. Only records accidents investigated by State Highway Patrol
18. Other

Fatalities
19. Number of fatal accidents in which a motorcycle was involved
20. Number of motorcyclists and passengers fatally injured in a motorcycle accident
21. Other

This information was assembled by the MOTORCYCLE SAFETY FOUNDATION and the AMERICAN MOTORCYCLIST ASSOCIATION.